

SOCIAL ACTION

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HERE AND THERE

Congratulations

Warm appreciation was given of the Government's suppression of food-controls. Not that the fall in prices which followed is without raising new problems. What was most gratifyingly proved with food-decontrol was that economic freedom in democracy remains the official policy. This should temper the fears of those who see in community projects, trade restrictions, exchange regulations so many threats of statolatry.

In reverse the public deserves congratulations and thanks from government for the style in which they approach the States Reorganisation Commission. Barring the Tamil districts of Travancore-Cochin, the representations are made without undue agitation and the Andhra precedent is not followed. Yet we are still at the period of political rearmament; the skirmishes might well begin when the Commission will uncover its positions. Then will be the time for the statesmanship of our leaders and the sanity of public opinion.

National Elite

An expert survey on a sample basis (4 %) of the 43,000 University students in Calcutta revealed appalling conditions. Out of one hundred students, 43 are undernourished, 30 suffer from defective eye-sight, 12 cannot procure the necessary text-books whilst 11 managed to borrow them; 30 come from families with a total income of Rs 150; 30 are ready to give up their studies for any job between Rs. 150 and 200; 55 have less than 24 sq. ft of floor-space at home (less than the standard fixed for factory workmen); university institutions, except government and missionary colleges, do not provide for more than 6 to 9 sq. ft per student during the day. If so many are prepared to give up an academic career for modest jobs, their intellectual ambitions must be pretty low; they do not seek crowns and laurels, but loaves and fishes.

Taken all together such conditions reveal a deep misery, explain much of the restlessness, and rouse anxiety about the future elite of the nation. Calcutta should be congratulated on bringing out this sorry state of affairs; diagnosis is a first step to cure. Let all other universities follow the lead and enlighten us about the conditions of our student youth.

Light on a Red Patch

A few weeks ago the "Bulletin of the Socialist International" published a report of Shri B. K. Shashtri, a prominent member of the Praja Socialist Party, who visited China last year with the Indian Workers' delegation. For six weeks he went on a conducted tour round the places which his hosts considered

the most interesting and instructive. He kept his eyes wide open and here are the main points of his report. Nothing that he saw roused his enthusiasm about conditions in China. Of course the Communist members of the Indian delegation kept to their well-known standards; Brajkishore was shocked at seeing women yoked to a plough in the rice-fields; but his Red colleagues grew enthusiastic about his striking proof of creative idealism in New China.

There was of course a visit to the Yangtse River Valley Project; the Red Comrades were red hot about such a splendid achievement of Chinese labour; Brajkishore soberly remarked we do better in the Damodar Valley with labour-saving machinery.

Chinese labourers are a hardy lot, hard-working, receiving little pay and having to purchase ordinary food which costs 60 per cent more than in India. If food is expensive, the prices of clothing and commodities in general are fantastic. The delegation was entertained lavishly; more sincerely than ever they lamented the misery of the Indian proletariat whilst savouring the delicacies which the new regime gives the leaders to-day and promises the people for to-morrow.

Quietly our socialist leader tested prices: a bar of ordinary bath-soap cost the equivalent of Rs 2/- an ordinary shirt Rs 6 -, a quarter pound pot of vaseline Rs 5-12-0, a three-ounce bottle of hair oil Rs 3/- (it would cost Re 1/- in India); and so on. As to productivity, the Chinese follow the Russian model; everything is estimated in percentages, so many per cent

more or less than last year ; which is not very illuminating unless you are told what it was last year. Ditto for the general elections ; as in Russia one party, one list ; other parties are said to exist, but guests can never find any trace of them or obtain their programmes. Freedom of thought, expression, association etc is inscribed in the Constitution for democratic edification but " a mere criticism of the powers that be may lead a man into utter oblivion. Even criticism in private is enough to undo a man's future. What is the use of giving a law to a people where there is hardly any judicial system to enforce it ? " Seven'y per cent of the jail population are political.

Civic discipline is amazingly strict. No going from one village to another, no travelling by train, no receiving of guests after ten at night without permission of the police or of the local party boss.

Social discipline in China looks impressive from India. No wonder in it. Each house-holder must keep a register of all the members, sex, age, occupation. Every fortnight it is checked by a government official to check the movements of each member. For every twelve or fifteen families there is a headman to check arrivals and departures, and check if orders are obeyed. Even so many checks are not enough ; children are trained to report on their parents to the school teacher who passes on the information to the police or the party boss for check and recheck.

Freedom of labour ? Each trade union must be affiliated to the All-China Federation of Trade-Unions which is a government department. No strike is allowed for increase in wages, for shorter hours etc. In

India a worker cannot be forced to work more than 8 hours, including half an hour's rest ; in China the working day is ten hours without recess, and only four days holiday with pay are allowed per year.

Concluding reflection of Brajkishore Shashtri ; " If that is the Communist best, it does not come up to the average of Nehru's misgoverned bourgeois India. We in India are living in a golden age. If you don't believe it, get yourself invited to China and see what goes on there."

A. L.

an employer prays

*bright daylight flees before the night :
the day is done, night comes anew ;
i kneel to set this day aright,
Lord, 'er the darkness drops its dew.*

*from morn till noon grouchy i sit
before my office-desk oblong ;
i use to workers words unfit
and work them hard unjustly long.*

*then noon-day passes by as well,
without a kindly word that's said,
and fellow-workers get it hell :
all this 'twixt waking hour and bed.*

*with shades of night-fall dark'ning deep,
the night-air close against my cheek,
alone i kneel (before i sleep)
repenting, Lord, i wasn't meek.*

— vinny

AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION AGAIN

Our readers are aware that for several months now the press and public in India have been discussing proposals for amending the Constitution. It will be remembered that as recently as June 1951 a number of important amendments to the Constitution were discussed by the interim Parliament, and that though they were passed by overwhelming majorities, there was still a good deal of determined opposition to some of them. However, there is no doubt that most of those amendments were not radical changes in the Constitution, but were clearer enunciations of what was undoubtedly in the minds of the original framers of the Constitution. This was particularly true of the amendments intended to ensure the progress of backward classes, and to facilitate the passing of zamindari legislation. Moreover, a good proportion of the original members of the Constituent Assembly were members of the Interim Parliament. The amendments were passed with their well-nigh unanimous support.

Now there is talk of further amendments. What are the subjects and the clauses on which the amendments are proposed? Are they mere clarifications or are they substantial changes? Are such changes justified by the situation in the country today? These are pertinent questions to which every thinking citizen must seek a clear answer, and on which he should express himself unequivocally. The safeguarding of fundamental rights and the stability of the government

of the country will depend upon the manner in which the public of India will handle this question of amending the Constitution.

The proposed amendments bear mainly on three important matters already dealt with in the previous amendments : freedom of speech and expression, state ownership of industries, and the abolition of zamindaries. The article that were then affected were Art. 19, clauses 2 and 6. By these amended clauses the State secured the right to place "reasonable restriction" on the right of freedom of speech, in the interests of security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order etc. Secondly they secured for the State the right to carry on any trade or business to the partial, and even complete exclusion of citizens. Thus the right of citizens to carry on any trade or business or occupation they chose, was limited, and in certain conditions, suppressed. Further, to Article 31, which provided for compensation when the state acquires property from citizens, and determines the broad procedure for paying this, certain additions were made in order to validate older measures, and to authorise the passing of new measures, for the suppression of zamindaris, even if these measures included provisions for transfer and compensation different from those indicated in the original article 31 as strictly interpreted by the Supreme Court.

Under the protection of those amendments, the process of starting important industries under State management, of nationalising certain other industries like Transport, has been going on at a reasonable rate.

Legislation for abolition of Zamindaris is being effectively put through and agrarian reform is well on its way. The Press Commission appointed, in response to the criticisms made against the amendment to Article 19, clause 2, to formulate proposals for safeguarding the rights and liberties of the Press under the conditions of "reasonable restriction" authorized by the Amendment, has been carrying out its inquiries and has just published its report. It would appear that there should be no urgency about further amendments even though there may be grounds for desiring certain modifications. But some sections of the public and of the Congress Party have been clamouring for immediate changes along the following lines.

The freedom by the Press notwithstanding the curb of "reasonable restriction" seems excessive and open to abuse in the view of certain "C" Class State Governments particularly in Sourashtra and Rajasthan. Moreover there is a fairly wide section of opinion demanding more stringent control of the Cinema in the interests of decency and morality. Secondly those impatient with the pace of industrial progress and agrarian reform, are demanding more radical powers for Government. There is a proposal to authorise Government to take over, at least temporarily, private industrial concerns without compensation. There is also the feeling prevalent in many radical circles, that with the obligation to pay compensation, Zamindaris will never be liquidated and the land problem solved. Hence the desire to provide for expropriation without compensation on the ground that the land belongs to the tiller. The P. S. P. Party has always advocated

this. The Bhoodan movement has encouraged the idea of surrender of land without compensation. The Kashmir Government has actually taken over and redistributed land without paying compensation. There is therefore a demand for further amendment of article 31 to secure these drastic powers. Lastly, to ensure that these powers will not be challenged by legal action and dilatory tactics, there is the proposal to amend article 226 so as to remove from the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court the special tribunals appointed for taking over estates and industrial concerns.

The mere summary of the proposals will show how radical these amendments are and how near they go to modify some of the fundamental provisions of the Constitution. It is therefore not surprising that opposition to them has been widespread. Chambers of Commerce, Bar Councils, and organs of the Press have been emphatic in exposing the dangers to liberty and the rule of law implied by some of these proposals. The prime need of the country is for increase of production. The private sector in industry, and the landlord who can work a big farm efficiently, are necessary for this. If the proposed amendments bring down agricultural and industrial production, if they frighten the investors of capital, if they diminish the power of the courts to maintain fundamental rights, a grave setback to the national stability and to national recovery will result. It is therefore not surprising that the Congress Working Committee, taking stock of all the aspects of the situation should have decided to postpone consideration of the amendments, on the ground that the

entire question needs further discussion and reflection. This decision shows that the leaders of the Congress are still solidly in favour of the ideal of mixed economy, and the adherence to democratic procedure, which the country has hitherto followed.

The speeches at the A. I. C. C. sessions confirm this conclusion. The role of the private sector in industry was clearly recognised. The need to develop small-scale and cottage industries was emphasised repeatedly. This is a Gandhian and "distributive," and not a specifically socialistic ideal. In bringing about agrarian reform, the importance of not interfering with food production was kept in view, and the role of cooperative farming was explained. The President of the Congress said that if the State were indeed to own industries, it was more profitable to start new ones efficiently than spend the resources of the State in paying compensation to older and less efficient private owned industries. The principle of compensation for acquisition of property by the State is therefore not given up and should apply to estates as well as to industrial concerns. To Mr. Gadgil who had advocated a more radical programme for state owned industries, the President replied that it was obviously wrong to frame resolutions on the supposition that the Constitution would be amended in a way necessary to implement those resolutions.

Thus far the outcome of the recent discussions in the country and in the A. I. C. C. sessions is satisfactory. But this does not mean that there are no dangers ahead. The declared objective of the Congress is the creation of a "Cooperative Com-

monwealth and Welfare State," and to change the social structure progressively so as to replace the present "acquisitive economy" by a "socialized economy." This may of course be interpreted in a democratic and acceptable sense. But in the hands of a more radical Congress leadership it might easily lead to experimenting with a full dress socialist economy. Pandit Nehru repeatedly speaks of rigid Marxism as outmoded and inapplicable to Indian conditions. He speaks of the swiftly moving conditions of the atomic age and the need for adapting ourselves continuously to them. This is perfectly sound, and true of economic and social conditions. But it must not lead us to an ethical pragmatism which denies the existence of permanent values and immutable principles. We believe that our Constitution has admirably formulated some of these values and immutable principles. In regard to such a basic document, the attitude should be of one of wise conservatism and of reluctance to change, unless an overwhelming case is made for it. Hasty changes may give promise of some immediate advantages but they would be too dearly bought because of the long-term consequences of instability and the lowering of public morale. On the grave matter of amending the Constitution, it behoves every one to be cautious and alert.

J. D'Souza

CULTURAL DEMOCRACY

In the initial article of this series on socially integrated democracy, a pointed reference was made to the cultural aspects of the problem. It was there stressed that, since this is the sphere of social life most closely related to the personal habits of its individual members, it is therefore the one which will most accurately reflect and most strongly influence the private and public attitudes of these people. Within the confines of this collective crucible, as it were, most of the temporal ideals, loyalties, and practices of a person are tempered. As a consequence of this fact, the contents of this preparation are likely to constitute the human materials, in a sort of molten form, whose temperament will largely determine the ultimate possibilities of a society's institutional development. Such a vital segment of man's social life, then, must be accorded ample attention, when considering the ways and means of consolidating the contributions of democracy to society as a whole.

On that earlier occasion, some mention of the complex character of the cultural concept was also made. It was said that culture is indeed a multicolored sociological term, one that may be employed in connection with human relationships involving a wide range of diversified social utility. If the notion is understood in its broadest sense, it will be synonymous with human social activity in its entirety. Culture is, under such circumstances, an expression that refers to the general living routine of a people. Thus we may speak of a society's political culture, its economic culture, its artis-

tic culture, its religious culture, physical culture, and so on. Going to the opposite extreme, and so conceiving the dimensions of this human quality in their narrowest limits, we put ourselves in the position of those who make culture identical with a certain facility of mind. Here, the objective reference seems to be a level of mental attainment, and that too more or less restricted to, or at least concentrated in, the knowledgeable realms of what are called the liberal arts. The covert assumption that underlays the first interpretation appears to exhibit a preference for the practical features of life. While that which premises the second gives the impression of an inclination to favour the speculative aspects thereof. The approach advocated in that preceding article on this point, it will be remembered, was one that might justifiably claim to be something like a middle stand between these antipodal attitudes. It makes no pretensions to the comprehensiveness of the first extremity's coverage, yet it does adopt the primarily practical orientation adhered to there. On the other hand, neither is it as restricted in its basic conception as the second, though it may perchance lean further in that direction than in the opposite one; but it makes, indirectly at least, allowances for the relevance of the speculative element in human affairs. In much the same fashion as that followed by Professor MacIver, in his highly regarded analysis of society, the contours of the cultural zone in man's life have been here marked off so as to include within their boundaries all those human endeavours the outcome of which amount to ends in themselves, so far as the subjects are concerned, and not mere means which must in turn be converted into

something else, or completed by something else, before they can contribute their bit to the satisfaction of human needs.¹

To spell-out this meaning more completely, it may be well to avail ourselves of the method of contrast with respect to the different essential characteristics of the major categories of social relations. Upon doing so, we see that, in their political undertakings, men aim at establishing certain general conditions of social peace and prosperity, within the protective framework of which they will be able to achieve their highest personal fulfillment. And that, in their economic ventures, men seek to provide the goods and services necessary, or helpful anyway, for meeting the demands of their temporal living requirements. Then, as a culmination, in a very real sense, of such preceding, preliminary efforts, we see that men indulge themselves in various enterprises from which they directly and decisively derive personal benefits rather than simply produce them for someone else, are immediately and intensely enriched instead of being correspondingly employed. These are the respective vital functions of the several main lines of man's social movements. The sharp distinctions that separate the final phase from the two preparatory ones, ought to make clear what is meant by the foregoing designation of cultural matters as social processes with a capacity for producing ends, not merely means of human development.

But this is not all that was said earlier regarding the nature of society's cultural relations. The process

¹ *Society*, R. M. MacIver, 1952 ed., pp. 446—448 ; 484—486.

of definition was carried to the point of designating education, recreation, and sanitation (health) as the major outlets for the realization of man's cultural objectives. Manifestly, more remains to be seen about this specific selection, before its validity can be ascertained.

Remembering the observation just made above, relative to the efficacy of cultural products as ends and not simply means in the attainment of the social purposes, an obvious question that immediately arises asks : what are the ends thus subserved by these particular productive procedures ? If one takes an essentially, even though roughly, adequate view of human nature, he is bound to affirm that the factors of finality within man consist of his mental, moral, and material faculties. The intellect, will, and various bodily organs of man are the ingredients which comprise the very substance of his being. All cultural programs and practices, therefore, will aim at the preservation and improvement of these powers in the human personality. Now the approach which must be followed in order to arrive at the intended goals of these endeavours is a dual one. It will have to provide both the opportunities for those dynamic, universal mechanisms of life and growth, namely nourishment and exercise. Man must be afforded access to the things that feed his spiritual and bodily faculties. Similarly, man requires avenues for engaging in yet more positive personal functions—extrovertive and productive rather than introvertive and consumptive—which will effect a consolidation and coordination of the gains accruing from his preceding assimilations. In other

words, man has to play, as well as eat and study. Only by adhering to such a balanced routine can man become well-ordered, or strong, in his total person. Consequently, when seeking the social procedures that perform a cultural service, we must be on the look out for those fulfilling the foregoing requirements. Such qualifications are surely present in the education, sanitation, and recreation facilities of a society, if we consider these enterprises in their most comprehensive capacities. In such a view, education includes everything having to do with the nourishment of the intellectual and volitional faculties in man, while sanitation plays a similar role with respect to the person's physical organs. Correspondingly, recreation applies to all forms of positive activity, by both the spiritual and physical faculties, intended primarily for the better internal felicity of these human powers. For such a choice and combination of cultural terms and acts we find further confirmation in the already mentioned social study of Professor MacIver.²

Having thus defined more explicitly and emphatically the general configuration of society's cultural categories, it is now appropriate to embark upon a consideration of the chief institutional consequences which the democratic social pattern produces there. These may, so far as practical purposes here are concerned, and so as to remain consistent with what has been said on the subject in the initial instalment of this series, be analysed from two particulars points of view, according to the nature of their implications for

² MacIver — *op. cit.*

the social members. Such approaches have previously been labelled quantitative and qualitative respectively.

The contents of the first set of these democratic ramifications relate to the numbers of a society's people who are afforded an entrance to its cultural precincts. And the arrangements which appear in this connection are the most comprehensive possible. All of a community's people, or, putting the statement in the more personalized democratic form, every person in a community is assured access to such commonly ordained premises. As critically important media for the protection and enhancement of human personality, programs of this kind are organized and operated on the widest scale attainable. Since every man is overtly recognized as a possessor of the same, essentially invaluable attribute of humaneness, each is therefore held to be a rightful claimant of a share, not in all instances identical by any means, in the resources made available for the accomplishment of this highest of temporal goals. Though some distinctions there will ever be, both of degree and kind, in the facilities secured by different persons, these shall always be subordinated to and circumscribed by a clear consciousness of an obligation that is basically homogeneous. Racial, religious, economic, and communal characteristics may be considered justifiable as starting points for a cultural enterprise. But they can never be accepted as stopping points in such undertakings. That is to say, while cultural associations may be formed with one or more of these ancillary factors of human relations as membership qualifications, such sectarian and secondary features should never be admitted as final.

determinants of an applicant's acceptability. These institutions must also, and at all times, be ready and willing to receive and assist those whose cultural needs cannot be satisfied in any other reasonable way. What is more, such organizations will even be inclined to favour the free and frequent intermingling of people having different backgrounds in these special respects, for the sake of the general cultural advantages thereby accruing to all concerned. As a final democratic measure in this social area, there should further be some cultural units which entirely disregard, from beginning to end, the least sign of such personal peculiarities as these.

From the viewpoint of a rational social theory, of course, all the quantitative conditions just mentioned should be present in every established social system, irrespective of whether or not it be operated according to fully democratic procedures. In keeping with the fundamental social principles affirmed in our earlier surveys of the political and economic sectors of society, it must again be acknowledged here that, in cultural affairs too, the various primary benefits available ought to be produced and distributed on the basis of their broadest possible social significance. Which, being interpreted in its simpler and more familiar sense, means that cultural activities have to be so conducted as to demonstrate a telling awareness of, and a moving sympathy for, the interests of all sections of a people. Just as the essential services provided by political and economic institutions must be ordained of and for the natural needs of all their participants, so too must the chief considerations of a cultural agency's operational

plan. These largely external obligations persist regardless of the exact form that the internal organizational features assume. Manifestly, one has to concede some degree of difference in ultimate responsibility to its users existing here, on the part of these three major types of social undertakings. It is being unrealistic if certain vital social facts are disregarded. Political associations, by their very nature, are wholly public entities, while economic and cultural establishments may be, and usually are, private in their purposes and practices. Hence a more intense social obligation attaches to the operations of the first type than to that of either of the others. Be that as it may, at least a proportionately analogous social duty is present in the second and third instances, and it is sufficient to command serious attention there.

There is yet a second realistic note that presses hard for recognition here, in much the same, though again not identical, manner as it does in the political and economic zones of society. This is the rather universal experience of men to the effect that these quantitative, and likewise some qualitative, requirements for a proper cultural development will neither as often nor as overtly be acknowledged and respected, as when the administration of the social units catering thereto is itself put into some direct relationship with those who hold the title to these outstanding claims. The controlling power of a society's cultural activities is, just like that of its political and economic counterparts, much more likely to be representative of and responsive to the fullest possibilities of its participants, when that control is to some extent shared by

all concerned. Democratic techniques are for the most part best prepared to safeguard and satisfy substantive cultural rights. Once more, though, some extremely relevant distinctions are in order. Since cultural groups are ordinarily privately conducted, to the extent that they are, they not only do not have to grant admission absolutely to everyone who applies, but, even among those who are admitted the opportunity for sharing functional control need not be uniformly distributed. Authority should be apportioned according to accountability. Consequently, a higher priority of power is due those who put forward some kind of labour or material resource in such an enterprise than those who merely cooperate for the sake of immediate personal satisfaction. The consumer here, as it were, can never stand in exactly the same footing with the producer, anymore than he can in the economic situation. Besides this point of differentiation, there is still another of even greater importance which should be emphasized. Cultural matters, being of an exceptionally personal nature, as we noted before, it will always happen that a relatively few individuals far exceed the majority of their associates in creative and productive ability. For various and mysterious reasons, these chosen souls are able to scale truly remarkable heights of artistic and scientific grandeur. Such uncommon talent must be duly honoured with superior rights and rank over their ordinary and less-advanced fellows, if the group as a whole is to enjoy the more exalted and exhilarating levels of achievement. But this trend of the discussion has brought us to the place where the previously-mentioned qua-

litative elements in the cultural picture should be elaborated upon.

In this second set of cultural factors, the particularly pertinent social feature is the manner in which people participate in their cultural institutions, as distinguished from the question of what people do this, which constituted the essence of the foregoing quantitative problem. Two separate categories of action must be distinguished sharply at the outset. There is the quite simple movement of a person in his or her capacity as a ordinary user of a cultural facility. Then there is the rather complex regulatory operation of the persons responsible for guiding and guarding or otherwise presenting the program. Democracy has implications for both forms of participation, although its main significance will be for the second rather than the first. Turning to the democratic workings in the prior sector as a start, one perceives immediately a double sign of a marked sense of responsibility there. One is personal. The other is social.

On the personal side, individuals demonstrate a keen awareness of, and appreciation for, the values arising out of one's cultural improvement. Possessing a real understanding of the positive meaning of life, and especially the personal implications thereof, they are persistently energetic in exploiting to the full every opportunity that promises increased cultivation of their various faculties. This assumes the proportions of a definite drive, not just a tendency, toward accentuating the active life. It is, of course, what constitutes the vital spark of virility so uniquely evident in a democratic society.

Socially speaking, there is a sharpened sense of concern manifested by each member on behalf of the similar requirements of others. Joining together in intimate solidarity, the core of which relationship is a common acknowledgment of their natural brotherhood under the fatherhood of God, every individual displays a decided tendency, not quite a drive perhaps, to exercise some self-restraint, so as to secure the corresponding rights of his neighbour. Such a prompting is essentially exemplified by a greater care in the usage of cultural implements, and a stronger urge to share what one has of these things with those who are less favourably blessed.

In the specifically service sector of society's cultural associations, further, and what are probably more relevant, in the social scene anyway, expressions of this activist attitude are everywhere encountered. One of these, really a prolongation, as it were, of the elevated social consciousness described above, entails an increased devotion of attention, on the part of an organization's general body of members, to the intricacies of the unit's administrative affairs. This expansion in their sphere of interest by a group's ordinary adherents is not limited to a mere desire for additional information. In a preponderant number of cases, there will be an accompanying inclination to shoulder, in some small fashion at least, a share of the burdens, and likewise the benefits, of management as well. Since this dynamic movement takes place within the context of both a public and a private zone of operations, due distinctions are accordingly made, as we saw before, between the relative scope for this sort of intervention in each of those respective functional orders.

Alongside and supplementing this healthy social sign shown by the whole membership directly, will be numerous, exceptional, individual contributions of a similar kind. That is to say, partly as a result of the ample means afforded for the enrichment of their natural abilities, and partly out of a lofty conception of their social obligations, and also for other reasons no doubt, many men and women will be both willing—even anxious—and able to step forward from the ranks of the users and make themselves available as servers in a host of various, vital capacities. By such a dual directive device, as represented by this and the immediately preceding practice, the democratic process will assure the cultural institutions which adopt it the means of maintaining a nice balance in the comprehensive and intensive aspects of its management.

Despite its tremendous inherent worth, all this wholesome outpouring of social talent and zeal would be utterly wasted, unless it were to be met by some sort of reciprocal response by those who happen to hold the offices of primary authority in a cultural unit. For the contributions that have been spoken of thus far are the kind chiefly forthcoming from the ranks, as one might describe them. Their sources are located, either amongst the lower cadre of servers or the general category of users, and as such can have no real efficacy unless they are received by the leaders in much the same spirit as that in which given. This does not mean that every offering of the kind must automatically and irrevocably be accepted. Most assuredly, however, it does imply granting them a cordial recep-

tion, and giving them a frank consideration on the basis of objective merit, at the very minimum. Under the inspiration and stimulation of the democratic ideal, these conditions for a cooperative and cumulative method of cultural progress will be more than met, again let us repeat, subject to valid variations in the public and private sectors of the system. Directors and their staffs will do whatever they can to encourage a continuous flow of advice, admonition, and applications for permanent and specialized participation from those who demonstrate a serious interest in the institutions under their charge. Committees, conferences, councils, and combinations of many kinds will be utilized as media for consultation and training purposes. Executive officials will themselves exhibit a readiness and willingness to learn as well as teach, and the measure of true merit will always be accorded the top priority among the standards of worthiness in their personal and professional codes of ethics. While such a testing instrument for judging of the acceptableness of a proposed action may include much that is essentially material in its mechanism, those elements will nevertheless be surrounded by, and subordinated to, others whose implications are predominantly spiritual, and whose ramifications are inherently moral. The practical significance of such substantive dualism is to establish an operational order that is simultaneously competitive and cooperative, but with the first quality ever restrained and regulated by the second.

Though all the foregoing principles and practices, both quantitative and qualitative, apply in each of the three separate cultural departments defined at the commencement of this discussion, a critical distinction as

to the manner of implementing the qualitative ones must be clearly observed. At the bottom of this complication, and hence the determinant of its general features, is the simple fact that, in two of the main cultural divisions—education and sanitation—those who partake of the benefits there conferred are almost invariably much less prepared to assume a positive position of any kind in their regard than those who produce or provide the same. This decidedly unbalanced situation follows from the very nature of the relationship that persists here, in which one party lacks and seeks some very specialized thing, while the other possesses and supplies that same thing. As a consequence of this rather intensive disparity between the parties, the receiver must realistically recognize a certain element of superiority in the donor which he, more often than not, will seldom ever be able to overcome. Therefore, while in both these sets of cultural circumstances the party of the second, or inferior, part will continue to enjoy a certain right to be heard on the subject of his connection with the party of the first part, yet will he simultaneously and seriously be obligated, out of respect for himself as well as the rights of his associate, to exert the utmost caution and circumspection in the way he enforces this prerogative.

The final comment in this discussion might well be centered upon the position of the state in a democratic cultural system. As the general temper of the preceding explanations should have suggested, the role of this social agency will be a decidedly subsidiary one. It is to render assistance only, to organizations of a private and semi-public nature, whenever and

wherever that may be required by the exigencies of a particular social situation. Since the cultural function is concerned with developing the individual personalities of a people, the organs of its multiple manifestations ought to be established and operated on the basis of a profound intimacy prevailing amongst the respective members. For this inherently natural reason, then, the family is recognized as the foremost instrumentality in the successful performance of these social tasks. Where its services are incomplete, the assistance of other larger associations becomes a practical necessity. But the state, being the largest and most impersonal of all social institutions, is inevitably the last on the list of potential providers of sound cultural media.

J. S. Connor

LIFE DEDICATION

From articles and interviews with Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan, one may easily gather the purpose and spirit which animate "Jeewandan", the life-donation movement he has started. With commendable devotion, Acharya Vinoba Bhave had launched the Bhoodan (land-gift) campaign; offshoots sprang up right and left: "sadhandan", "sampattidan", "buddhidan", "premdan", etc. which implied assistance to the poor in the way of help, capital, advice, love etc. It was reserved for Shri Jaya Prakash to delve deeper into this general movement of generosity, synthesize it and give it its full play in a movement of life-dedication. This life-dedication to a cause is nothing new

in India who has known Gandhiji and his true followers, or those who are actually working for Harijan uplift, khadi, basic education, etc. Nor is the new movement a mere wing of the Bhoodan of Vinoba Bhave. The Bhoodan movement itself does not aim at merely securing thousands of acres and preparing agrarian legislation. In the words of Shri Jaya Prakash, "it is a far more significant movement. It is the beginning of an all-round social and human revolution; human because it aims at changing man along with society. It is an application on a general scale of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent technique of revolution". Mr. Pyarelal calls it "the spearhead of a non-violent revolution whose implications reach far and wide".

The secret of its success lies in the Gandhian heart-conversion. Heart-conversion was the only possible weapon of the national movement; since independence it remains but as a weapon of choice. Conversion must precede legislation. "Persuasion, change of heart and mind; creation of new social values and the corresponding climate of opinion, non-cooperation with wrong where persuasion proved inadequate: these were Gandhiji's weapon". Law might change social relations, it cannot coerce the individual heart. But the human heart is always open to persuasion since 'all men are fundamentally the same and at bottom good. Do they not all come "trailing clouds of glory from God who is our home"?'

Bhoodan should be viewed as a movement of heart-conversion in rural India. It began in the agrarian sphere for basic reasons: land is a primary source

of production, its problems are most urgent, it is of direct interest to the vast majority of the population. Moreover land would afford the most tangible and workable form of property to test and illustrate the new social movement.

Shri Jaya Prakash goes further and argues his case on theoretical grounds. "All wealth is a social product and no earning is possible without social co-operation. Whatever we possess therefore belongs to society. We are no more than the trustees of what we have, we are implicitly requested by society to take good care of our trust and use it for the benefit not of ourselves but of all of our fellowmen. But whereas in the agrarian sphere the idea that the land being a gift of nature belongs to society is easily accepted, in the commercial, industrial or professional field, the corresponding idea would be difficult of general acceptance". From such passages, one should not conclude that Mr. Jaya Prakash stands for nationalisation or denies private property. He repudiates all Marxian ideology and shuns statolatry with the sincerest conviction. He only gives a lay expression to Gandhiji's trusteeship idea. As far as we can understand him, he would readily admit that property rights imply the right to make and the right to distribute (*jus procurandi et distribuendi*) and that the wealth of the earth is intended by the Creator to be utilised for the benefit of the whole of mankind, man being entrusted with the task of evolving such a system of wealth production and distribution as to satisfy the right claim of producers and the needs of all. He appears to overemphasize one factor in the social aspect

of property (namely the contribution of social organisation to wealth production) ; wealth production has a social side not only in its origin (other men past and present being responsible in part for whatever is produced by man) but also in its purpose (it is meant to serve all men and even in the most individual private property, the surplus of each is owed to the community).

The concrete problem for the Indian countryside is : " What system of ownership and production is the most human ? the most efficient in results and the most respectful of man's dignity ? " Even the most other-worldly people will agree that " material goods should be sufficient to secure a respectable life and to raise men to that degree of affluence and culture which, when put to a wise use, does not impede virtue but makes its practice much easier ". Not only consumption but also production must be made amenable to man's requirements, suit his creative urge, his sense of independence, his need of security. A few years ago, one could say that all these requisites and benefits were unknown to the Indian peasant. He was the slave of the soil and of custom, of the heat and of the rain, of money and money-lenders, the victim of land-laws and landlords, of a hundred agencies that cramped his initiative, shrivelled up his personality and isolated him in misery and despair. He had lost his grip on the land and his grit in work, he was no more the soul of the countryside. Even now the slogan should not be ' man, back to the land ', but ' land, back to man '. The property regime, the method of cultivation, the circumstances and agencies of agriculture-

must be turned upside down. This is not a revolution, as Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan boldly calls it, it is to be a regular upheaval. A revolution may mean nothing better than turning over a dung-hill and that process never cleaned any place.

Shri Jaya Prakash rightly fears that if violence steps in, "one form of injustice and exploitation, of greed and selfishness will be replaced by another". Only non-violence can create the necessary upheaval, bury greed, selfishness, injustice, and bring out what is best in man, justice, mutual respect and brotherhood.

On what basis to reconstruct rural India? On what may be called agrarian humanism.¹ Our social endeavour should always remain within the range assigned by man's nature and enlightened by past experience. Capitalism focused its attention on the individual and ignored the group; Communism takes no account of personality and views the group exclusively; both have been tried and both have failed, for both de-humanize man's economic life. Economic humanism is the only system which keeps in mind both the individual and the social character of economic wealth.

One might suggest the following scheme. Let a homestead be secured for each villager in full ownership: a house, 'an acre and three cows or three acres and a cow' as G. K. Chesterton would say; in short a little kingdom where the peasant would be the unchallenged master. Barring the homesteads the rest of the village-land should be village-property cultivated in common for standard crops and administered

¹ Cf. Agrarian Humanism in *The New Review*, March 1937.

by the panchayat. The village needs a jungle, a pasture-land, and fields; it needs irrigation, timely cultivation, improved machinery, cooperative buying and selling. This is hardly possible now in most places owing to fragmentation of holdings and fragmentation of cultivation. Irrigation work is impossible if individual ownership is left to run wild. The same holds good about common pastures, and village forest. Without cooperative resources, improved machinery, seeds, fertilizers, etc. are beyond the reach of the ordinary peasant. Such a system aims at balancing all human factors and needs. The homestead safeguards the peasant's personality and his liberty. The village-holding is a rampart against state-intrusion whilst it maintains the personal contact between the producer and the means of production; the village is a corporate person, a person of persons, and as such can be an owner-producer with all the advantages of economic self-interest. The village-holding can be constructed on a share system with all due limitation on the number and significance of the shares. Wages can be given in any shape: distribution of crops and profits can be calculated on shares and wages. In short the scheme allows elbow-room for the free play of personality whilst securing all the benefits of cooperation and solidarity. In that way the village is handed back to the villagers and the countryside recovers its soul.

It is along these or along parallel lines that the Bhoodan movement is finding its way. The Bhoodan leaders have no hard and fast plan to be imposed on each and every village or villager; they want no compulsion at all and that is why they speak of a

"stateless society"; all surrendering of land or capital must be voluntary, all agreement about common cultivation depends on the villagers themselves, all legislation must be only registering the will of the villagers. Non-violence, heart-conversion, peace, harmony, village self-sufficiency, village self-rule; it is in such terms that the Bhoodan movement intends rural reconstruction which would precede industrial and commercial reconstruction. Already preliminary studies are made on the "work-communities" which are started here and there in Continental Europe and take after the Boimondau type. These are groups of one hundred or so artisan families which work at their trade on a cooperative basis and distribute the profits according to each one's contribution to the common undertaking; not only efficiency at work, but also factors like temperament, artistic service, honour, sociability, etc. are given recognition; the idea is to achieve a socio-economic integration in community life.

The rebuilding of India along these lines is often enough denounced as utopian; mischief-mongers did not fail to do their best to ridicule and spoil the Bhoodan movement. In contrast, Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan considers it an ideal that should appeal to the ordinary people, particularly to young people; after months of prayerful meditation he launched his appeal and invited volunteers to join him and to dedicate their life to the pursuit of so high a purpose. The first response at the Bodh Gaya Sarvodaya Sammelan was heartening. Some five hundred young people offered their services for life; they are the "jeewandis". The

jeewandis is not expected to leave wife and children and to become a sanyasin or bikku. He is expected to make his gift of land or capital if he has any. If he has none, he should take the plunge and face a life of hardship and poverty, prepare for manual work, resign not membership but office in any political party. The movement is not to create a party but to bring into harmonious work people of all parties and unite all for the rebirth of the countryside and the nation. The jeewandi must dedicate the whole of his life to the cause embodied in the movement. He should first of all better himself, acknowledge his faults and deficiencies and remake himself. Jeewandan is a spiritual pilgrimage; there lies its most valuable significance.

The guidance of the recruits is with Mr. Dhiren Mazumdar, President, Sarva Seva Sangh, Khadigram P.O., Bihar.

The All-India Catholic Social Conference held at Ernakulam in April last under the chairmanship of His Grace Dr. J. Attipetty resolved "that Catholics be urged to join the Bhoodan movement understood as the voluntary surrender of land by land-owners provided that the distribution of the land be done in accordance with principles in harmony with Catholic teaching". Possibly some members attending the Conference had heard of individual cases of undue pressure or unfair distribution; but if the movement abides by the directives of the leaders, there is little fear of disharmony between the Bhoodan campaign and the Catholic social movement. Let those who apprehend such disharmony join the Bhoodan in strength and keep it on the lines traced by its originators. It is

there that they will meet with young people who realistically pursue a noble national ideal which they can share and which they should foster. *A. Lallemand*

STUDENTS AT WORK

The Seva Samaj of the Govt. Arts College, Madras, organised a students' camp at Tirur during the May Holidays. This camp followed the various social activities of the Seva Samaj in Tirukachur, Pichivakkam, Thakkolam, Kunrathur and Pennalurpet in the course of the previous two years. The camp was under the able direction of Mr. Ignatius Absalom. From the report graciously forwarded to Social Action, we learn that this year the camp motto was "do all the good we can, to whomsoever we can and in every way we can". Ten students volunteered and the ten stayed till the end.

Their social activities were various: a night-school (17 adults in the literacy class held between 8 and 10 p.m.), lectures on social education for the workers by learned experts, magic-lantern shows for the villagers, digging compost-pits and soak-pits, milk distribution to children; the main task was the building of a road (750 ft. by 6) so as to facilitate the approach to the local cemetery.

The camp was run with the funds of the Seva Samaj (at cost Rs. 450), but there is hope a grant of As. 12/- per student per day will be made by the Central Planning Commission through the Collector.

A most gratifying feature of the venture was the hearty coopearation of students, patrons, villagers and officials. A genuine specimen of national solidarity.

A. L.

SOCIAL SURVEY

FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT

Public interest has not to be taken in too narrow a way. Periodically the question of foreign specialists comes in the House of the People and in the press. It was contended that 50 foreign engineers got a salary equivalent to 150 Indian chief engineers. The Government affirmed that it was its policy to replace foreign personnel whose special technique had been successfully grasped by Indians. But there were cases of irreplaceable foremen in charge of machines never used in India in order to insure the smooth and efficient working.

The question of foreigners working in India brings to the fore a racial as well as an economic question. Everybody who is not a lunatic will condemn wholesale the racial policy of Dr. Malan. One will also feel with India when she desires that a fair treatment be meted to the descendants of her nationals and to her nationals working in Ceylon, but politicians should not by their continual heckling of the Government on this question give the outside world the impression that they want freedom outside for people of their own race, without being ready to concede the minimum to those of other nations happening to live in India.

INDUSTRIALISATION

Sri B. M. Birla, President of the Indian Chambers of Commerce pleaded in Bombay for an all out industrialisation of the country to improve the standard of living. This standard of living could be doubled within 10 years, instead of 27 laid down by the Planning

Commission. 300 crores of goods actually imported could be fabricated in the country, leaving still 100 crores worth of merchandises to come from outside. The main hurdle was the question of capital. India needs 2,000 crores and is not to day in a position to invest such an amount in productive activity. He deprecated the idea that nationalization would help the Government to get all the finances it needed, nationalization does not create new money. So let us borrow from abroad and restore free economy in all the sectors. Let us also face the facts that rationalization is needed. It does not mean throwing people out of employment, but on the contrary it means more wages, more production and a higher standard of living.

Sri Deshmukh, the Finance Minister, stressed the fact that Foreign Capital would be welcome on the condition that it does not jeopardize the economic freedom of the country. While the different services of Government praise themselves for the work accomplished thanks to the five-year plan, Acharya Kripalani deemed the 5 year plan a failure, because it was based on violation of civil liberties by the use of extraordinary laws. If the production has increased in some sectors, it has not brought the relief expected. Unemployment has not been solved. Taking the contrary thesis to the one of Birla he affirmed that the cause of the failure lies in the fact that the plan has been conceived in terms of mechanical improvements, in increased production of goods and not at all in a human way. There was little thought about man. To dream of industrialisation as in the U.S.A. and in the

United Kingdom is utopian. Industrialisation takes time to be achieved. The one, more spectacular of the USSR, has been bought at the price of too many sufferings. It should be necessary not to copy but to mark out a plan which will delimit the scope of State enterprises ; private big industries, and decentralized undertakings. It is not the statisticians who will disprove the high price paid in USSR. According to some of them, only since 1949 about 15 million people perished in the undertakings started by Government and in political purges. That means one murder every ten seconds for five years. Without counting those from the start of the revolution. Let us now turn back to India.

CORRUPTION

Mr. Kripalani is at the head of the Commission against corruption in the Railways. The findings up to now are not very startling. Not that the facts are denied, they face everybody who has anything to do with the Railway, from the third class passenger who could not be pressed more, were he put between the vises of a gin press, to the industrialists looking in vain for wagons. The shortage of wagons, the restriction about the transport of some goods, the cumbersome proceedings and the lack of information given to the people, and the lack of control on the part of the Railways authority are the causes of the disease pointed out. But since the Railways are not the only sector where corruption flourishes, to point out some immediate causes is not enough. One should go higher and like the philosopher look for ultimate reasons. In that case the root of all this evil would be easily found in lack of conscience among employees and usagers

of the public services. It is not a commission which will remedy that fundamental defect. Education would not be sufficient, and this lack of education is all the same at the bottom of many errors and difficulties. Reports on Small Industries in Delhi show that there is very little initiative. People expect the Government to buy outdated products and to impose them on Institutions receiving Government grants. There is no proper method of work and of selling. So there should be a breadth of vision sadly lacking. It would lead to modernisation creating new employment, many talents would find employment. India has to come to it or stagnate. The Bombay Shroff Committee of Finance brings another complaint. The social laws which weigh heavily on industry.

Against such assertions we could marshal those of the Labour tending in the opposite direction, and clamouring for a more human treatment. For observers, such discussions sound like a dialogue between two stone-deaf people. Neither of them cares to hear and even less to understand the view point of the other. Capital wants to stop the progress of the workers and go back to the good old days when labour was enslaved. Labour in order to keep the present position is ready to thwart progress.

EDUCATION

To broaden the views of the future generations of India, an effort is made in the line of education. Bombay has decided to start 4,000 new schools, one for every 500 inhabitants, and to apply the regulations of compulsory education in the area recently united to

Bombay whenever there will be a group of 1000 inhabitants.

More modest, Madras thinks of starting 1270 single teacher schools. One school for a population of 1000 inhabitants. To finance such projects the Centre will pay the first year 75% of the expenses, only 50% in the second year; 25% in the third; later Madras would find the resources for keeping up the schools. Along with the building up of schools, it is hoped that the Educational Department will have a coherent policy and, even if it is not the best in the abstract, stick to it. After the agitation about the Rajaji educational project, stability is badly needed. It is just then that people would be glad to know the intentions of Government on Higher Elementary grade teachers. Without any warning the standard of examinations has been raised, making a hecatomb of victims. A town, like Mathurai, dispensed with the services of 60 higher elementary lady teachers who are replaced by only 30 secondary grade teachers, more qualified, it is true, but will they have to put up with the double amount of work?

It is long ago that Burke remarked that the "spirit of chivalry is gone". One wonders if it has ever existed in Mathurai? Anyhow the more elementary spirit of justice is also needed. The teachers dismissed, who had worked a full year and should consequently have the right to one month holiday, are deprived of it and their services terminated on the 30th of April. If a body like the Mathurai Municipal Council resort to such a method, how can we expect private undertakings to care for the law and how can the represent-

atives of the people sincerely take up the interests of their electors ?

Andhra has also devised a new scheme of educations. It insists on the quality of teachers ; none can be accepted unless he has been trained. Committees will be appointed to direct Municipal and Rural schools. If the technicians, members of the teaching profession, Inspectors are well represented, the elected politicians will always have seats : two out of five in the cities and about the same number in the rural areas. Let us hope that the representatives of the panchayats will have the minimum of education to care for the intellectual interests of the pupils and not bring the competitions of panchayat and market in the academic sphere. One of the pillars of the new policy is to do away with aided schools. They should be given notice to hand over their concern to committees. However in some cases individuals and chiefly bodies registered for the specific purpose of education will be granted leave to continue their work. If the Andhra legislators were attentively reading the papers, they would have seen a speech by the director of the Lutheran schools of the western coast, pointing out that the supervision of schools by a body of qualified persons is far better than even State regulations. It works for efficiency, and is in the well-understood interests of the teachers. Help can be given them in case of need, which an impersonal bureau will be unable to achieve. Travancore-Cochin decided to give free education in I and II forms ; it will cost the State Rs. 2,580,000. In III F. the uniform fees will be Rs. 24 and for the IV, V, VI, it will reach Rs. 48, all told.

E. Gathier

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